AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method that employs a processor that executes instructions for [[of]] responding to a request for a supplier quotation (RFQ) indicative of terms for delivery of goods or services by the supplier by employing a processor capable of executing instructions, the method comprising:

> accessing an index by executing processor instructions, wherein the index is stored in a first data store on a remotely located computer storage media having one entry for each of a plurality of RFQs, each entry including identification information related to the RFQ with which it is associated, each of the RFQs being generated by an RFQ generator at one of a plurality of requesters and stored at one of a plurality of data stores remotely located from the first data store and wherein the identification information for each entry in the index is provided to the index by the RFQ generator that generated the RFQ with which the entry is associated;

> identifying an RFQ for reply, by selecting an entry in the index, wherein identifying an RFQ for reply includesincluding identifying, from information in the selected index entry, a second data store in which the identified RFQ is stored from one of the plurality remotely located data stores;

> retrieving the identified RFQ from the second data store; and

> generating a reply to the retrieved RFQ by providing information requested in an RFQ template associated with the retrieved RFQ.

2. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein identifying an RFQ the RFQ for reply comprises:

> filtering entries in the index of RFQs based on supplier filter criteria to create a subset of entries that meet the supplier filter criteria; and

selecting the index entry~~an index entry~~ from the subset of entries.

3. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 1 and further comprising:

after retrieving the identified RFQ, applying detailed supplier filter criteria to the retrieved RFQ based on a content of the retrieved RFQ.

4. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 3 wherein generating a reply, comprises:

generating a reply to the retrieved RFQ only if it meets the detailed supplier filter criteria.

5. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 1 and further comprising:

transmitting the reply to the requester that generated the retrieved RFQ.

6. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein generating the reply comprises:

accessing content of the retrieved RFQ; and

generating the reply based on the content of the RFQ.

7. (Previously Presented) The computer implemented method of claim 6 wherein generating the reply comprises:

automatically generating the reply based on the content of the RFQ without human intervention.

8. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein accessing the index, comprises:

accessing the index over a global computer network.

9. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein retrieving the identified

RFQ, comprises:

retrieving the identified RFQ from the data store at the requester over a global computer network.

10. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 1 and further comprising:

prior to accessing the index, providing supplier registration information to a registration component; and

downloading a reply engine, the reply engine accessing the index.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method that employs a processor to execute instructions for [[of]] soliciting a response to a request for supplier quotation (RFQ), the RFQ being generated by an RFQ generator at a requester and including job information indicative of terms for delivery of goods or services from a supplier to the requester, the method comprising:

entering the job information into a predetermined RFQ template;

saving the RFQ template, by employing the processor to execute instructions, at a predetermined location in a data store local to a computer system at the requester, such that the RFQ template is exposed for downloading to a supplier for generation of the response;a reply; and

sending indexing information using the RFQ generator for computer implemented indexing of the RFQ template to an index remote from the computer system of the requester when the RFQ template is saved without prompting from the remote index; and

preparing the processor to receive the response.

12. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 11 and further comprising:

prior to entering the job information, providing supplier registration information to a

registration component; and

downloading an RFQ generation engine, the RFQ generation engine sending the indexing information.

13. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 11 wherein entering the job information comprises:

entering requester filter criteria indicative of suppliers authorized to reply to the RFQ template.

14. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 11 wherein sending indexing information comprises:

sending requester filter criteria indicative of suppliers authorized to reply to the RFQ template.

15. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 11 and further comprising:

receiving a reply to the RFQ template from a supplier.

16. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 15 wherein entering the job information comprises:

entering award criteria indicative of criteria considered in awarding a job corresponding to the RFQ to a supplier.

17. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 16 and further comprising:

evaluating the received reply based on the award criteria; and

suggesting a winning supplier based on the evaluation of the award criteria.

18. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 17 wherein evaluating comprises:

weighting the award criteria according to a predetermined weight.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method <u>that employs a processor executing instructions for</u> [[of]] indexing requests for supplier quotations (RFQs), each of the RFQs being generated by a requester by a computer system at the requester and including job information indicative of terms for delivery of goods or services from a supplier to the requester, the method comprising:

receiving indexing information for each RFQ from the requester without prompting of the requester, the indexing information being<u> provided by an RFQ generator at the requester that generated the RFQ and being</u> indicative of the RFQ stored at requester data store local to the computer system at the requester; and

entering an entry<u> by executing instructions with the processor</u> in a data store on a computer storage media remote from the requester computer system for each RFQ in an index based on the index information, the entry being indicative of a category of a corresponding RFQ and a location of the corresponding RFQ on the requester data store, the index being exposed to access by suppliers.

20. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 19 wherein entering an entry comprises, for each entry in the index, including filter criteria accessible by the suppliers to identify RFQs for reply.

21. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 19 wherein receiving the indexing information includes receiving an identifier of a specific supplier.

22. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 21 and further comprising:

notifying the specific supplier that an RFQ is indexed that identifies the specific supplier.

23. (Original) The computer implemented method of claim 19 wherein receiving indexing information comprises:

receiving the indexing information from a remote requester over a network.

24. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented system for responding to a request for a supplier quotation (RFQ) generated by at least one requester and indicative of terms for delivery of goods or services by the supplier, the system comprising:

> an RFQ reply engine <u>including instructions stored on a computer storage medium and executed by a processor for accessing, without prompting,</u>~~configured to access~~ an index of RFQs stored on a data store, the index including entries <u>each of which is</u> provided by a<u>n RFQ generator that generated the RFQ with which the entry is associated on a</u> computer system at a requester <u>that is </u>remote from <u>the </u>data store ~~without prompting~~, identify an RFQ for reply, retrieve the identified RFQ from the computer system at the requester, and generate a reply to the retrieved RFQ.

25. (Original) The system of claim 24 wherein the RFQ reply engine is configured to identify an RFQ by filtering entries in the index of RFQs based on supplier filter criteria, and identifying the identified RFQ as an RFQ that meets the supplier filter criteria.

26. (Original) The system of claim 24 wherein the RFQ reply engine is further configured to, after retrieving the identified RFQ, apply detailed supplier filter criteria to the retrieved RFQ based on a content of the retrieved RFQ.

27. (Original) The system claim 26 wherein the RFQ reply engine is configured to generate a reply by generating a reply to the retrieved RFQ only if it meets the detailed supplier filter criteria.

28. (Original) The system of claim 24 wherein the RFQ reply engine is configured to generate the reply by accessing content of the retrieved RFQ and generate the reply based on the content of the RFQ.

29. (Currently Amended) A <u>computer implemented </u>system for soliciting a response to a request for supplier quotation (RFQ), the RFQ being generated by a requester and including job

information indicative of terms for delivery of goods or services from a supplier to the requester, the system comprising:

an RFQ generation engine including stored instructions executed by a processor that receivesconfigured to receive the job information into a predetermined RFQ template, save saves the RFQ template at a predetermined location in a data store on a computer storage medium local to the requester, such that the RFQ template is exposed for downloading to a supplier for generation of a reply, and collects and sends indexing information for computer implemented indexing of the RFQ template at an index on a remote computer system without prompting from the remote computer system.

30. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein the RFQ generation engine is configured to receive the job information by receiving requester filter criteria indicative of suppliers authorized to reply to the RFQ template.

31. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein the RFQ generation engine is configured to send indexing information by sending requester filter criteria indicative of suppliers authorized to reply to the RFQ template.

32. (Original) The system of claim 29 wherein the RFQ generation engine is further configured to receiving a reply to the RFQ template from a supplier.

33. (Original) The system of claim 32 wherein the RFQ generation engine is configured to receive the job information by receiving award criteria indicative of criteria considered in awarding a job corresponding to the RFQ to a supplier.

34. (Original) The system of claim 33 wherein the RFQ generation engine is further configured to evaluate the received reply based on the award criteria, and suggest a winning supplier based on the evaluation of the award criteria.

35. (Original) The system claim 34 wherein the RFQ generation engine is configured to evaluate the received reply by weighting the award criteria according to a predetermined weight.